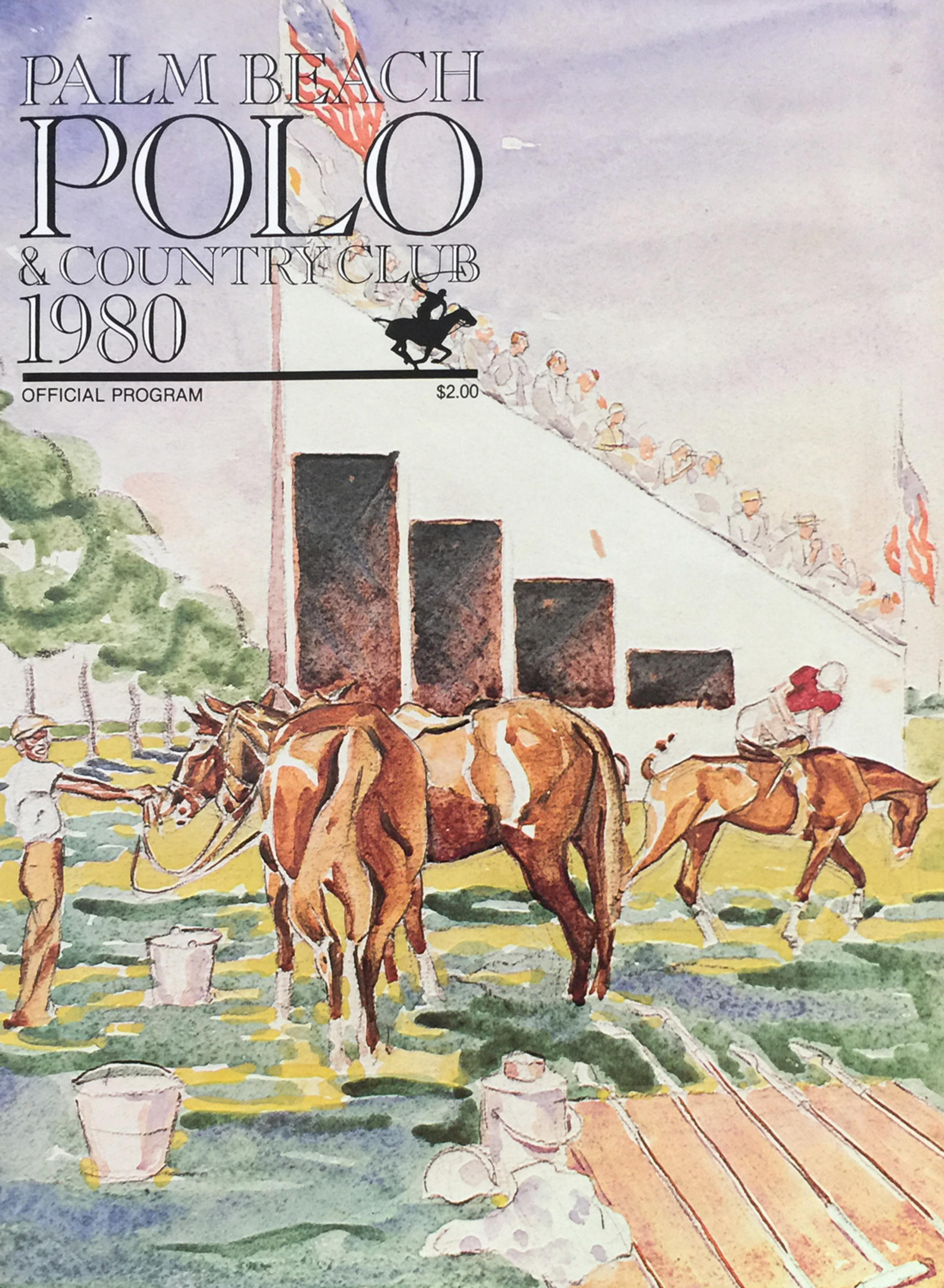


# PALM BEACH POLO & COUNTRY CLUB 1980

OFFICIAL PROGRAM

\$2.00





POLO



DECEMBER 1979 \$2.00



## **Polo Art**

REDISCOVERING JOSEPH W. GOLINKIN  
(1896-1977)

*By Jeremy Chisholm*



IF DISCOVERY CAN BE RIVALED, IT IS THROUGH REDISCOVERY—AND THEN, ONLY IF CHERISHED MEMORIES ARE SURPASSED. IMAGINE, IF YOU WILL, A STUDIO FILLED WITH THE VERY PAINTINGS WHOSE REPRODUCTIONS HAD brought to life a favorite book. The hours of pleasure spent with page after page of *The American Sporting Scene* paled before Joseph W. Golinkin's brilliant originals.

Freed from the limitations of the printer's craft, these large watercolors literally burst with life, color, motion, grace and tension, resulting in powerful yet appealing portrayals of their primary subject — man. Whether of athletes, beach-goers or bums, cities or seas, the pictures brim over with people in motion, at rest, at play. Golinkin painted the moods, the spectacle of man. He celebrated the species, his sport, his habitat and the humor of his behavior. J.W. Golinkin's technical mastery freed him from slavish detail,



## Polo Art

but his acute observation missed nothing. He had unusual command and feeling for action, for man and animal in competitive motion. Talent and perception combined to produce faithful but highly individual pictures. Even the smallest figures are recognizably engaged in specific pursuits, and all are infused with a special life.

As a youth, the Midwest-born Golinkin attended the Chicago Art Institute. Following his demobilization from the navy in 1922, he moved to New York where he would study under George Luks at the Art Students League. Shortly afterwards he was acclaimed as a "prominent younger American artist," and his work was extensively shown, published and reproduced throughout the United States and abroad. He received gold and bronze medals at the 1932 and 1936 olympiads for excellence in art relating to sport. In 1929 and 1941, books based on his work were published — *New York is Like This* and *The American Sporting Scene*.

By the time *Sporting Scene* appeared, however, Golinkin was back in active navy duty. At the threat of war, he made a characteristic decision. In 1938 he turned down Time Inc.'s offer to head their war project by covering the front as an illustrator and returned to the U.S. Navy. His comment was typical: "America has an abundance of good painters but far too few trained officers."

Golinkin did not paint while in the service. Indeed, he could not. His integrity, independence, purity and versatility were indivisible and only to be given whole-heartedly. Joseph W. Golinkin was an American of the old mold, the strong perhaps silent type. It was as unthinkable to him to follow his contemporaries abroad to study and paint as it was to ignore his country's call. A private even reticent man, Golinkin possessed the inner warmth and charm to lead others and to appreciate people as outwardly different from himself as his carousing teacher, the great George Luks. The range of his artistic subject matter is



equalled only by the breadth of his naval career. Golinkin remained in the navy until 1958, painting only on one four-month leave of absence.

Golinkin's work did not suffer from the 20 year interruption. As the man matured and mellowed so, too, did his subject matter. After his return from duty, Golinkin concentrated on a more serene arena — sailing. Man, of course, was still central, but more distant. His America's Cup series spanning the 1962 to 1976 races is somehow a final synthesis and solution to the

apparent contradiction of his naval and artistic life. The sea and man's elegant but lethal struggle with her, the beauty of their interaction, are a perfect conclusion to this American artistic life.

The interruption had, however, had a profound effect on Golinkin's nascent fame. Dealers, galleries, collectors and editors who had courted him before the war were gone or were no longer interested in representational painting. One New York show, several country exhibits and the publication of *Twelve-Meter Challenges for the America's Cup* constitute Golinkin's post-navy public life in the art world. Fortunately, he was no longer financially dependent on art. Private painting, a warm family and an active civic life were more than enough. For Golinkin, the satisfaction was a talent well served.

Golinkin painted daily for 45 years. Drawings, sketches, lithographs and major watercolors depict prohibition, the jazz

ABOVE: "INTERNATIONAL POLO AT MEADOWBROOK: 1930"; HAND COLORED LITHOGRAPH ON BOARD, C.1930, 16.25" X 11.25".

OPPOSITE TOP: "INTERNATIONAL POLO AT MEADOWBROOK" (PLAYER #3) 'HITCHCOCK CHASED BY LACEY'; HAND COLORED LITHOGRAPH, 9.25" X 13.5".

OPPOSITE MIDDLE: "HITCHCOCK, INSIDE FORE, THREE OTHERS"; HAND COLORED LITHOGRAPH, C.1930, 11.5" X 16".

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: "HITCHCOCK, LACEY"; HAND COLORED LITHOGRAPH. C.1930, 11.25" X 15".



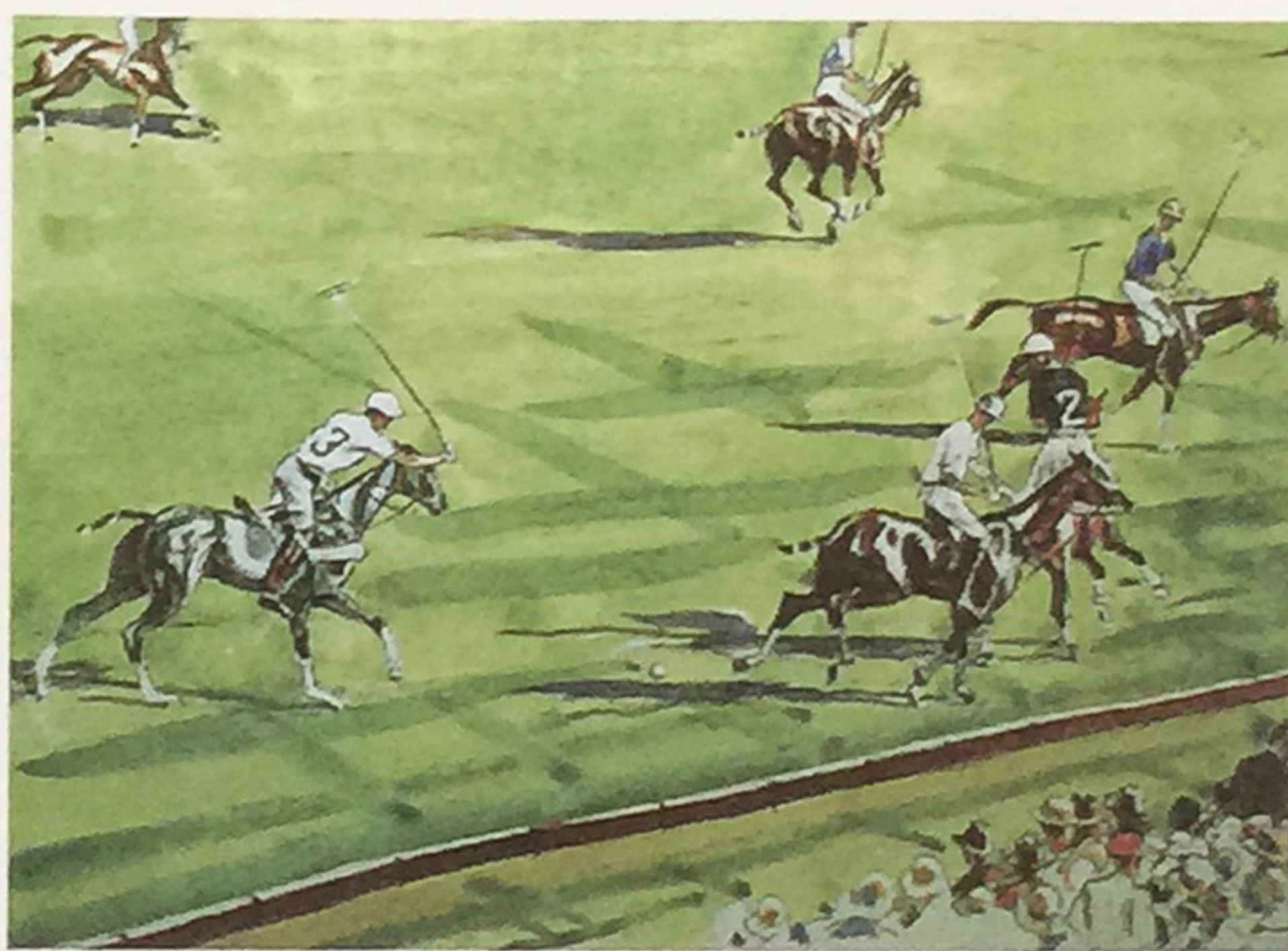
## Polo Art

cult, New York, Palm Beach, racing, chasing, hunting, polo, tennis, golf, boxing, baseball and a myriad of other sports and spectacles.

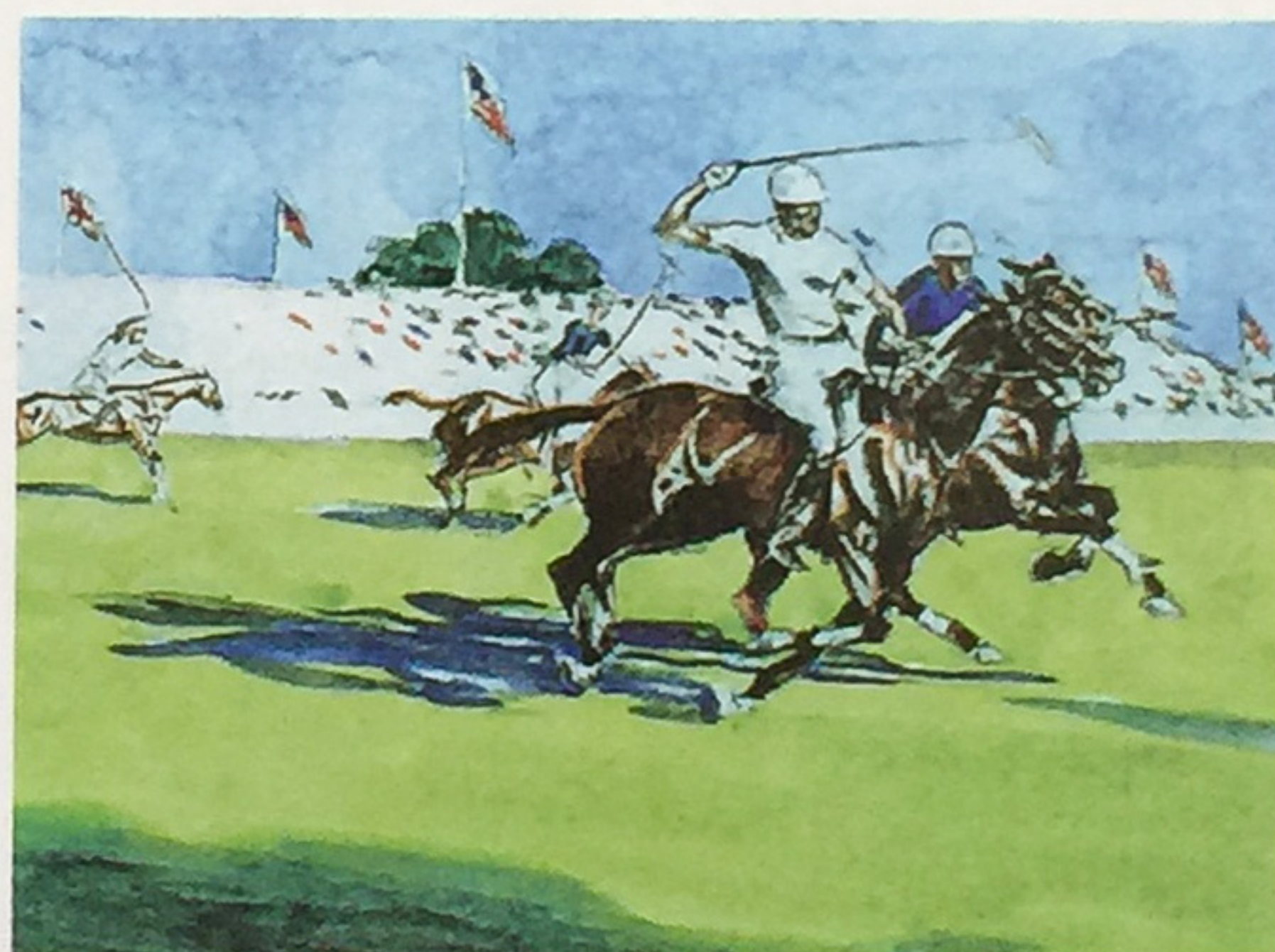
The earlier prewar paintings focus on the man's youthful pursuits. The polo works were typical of the special period in U.S. polo's history — the 1920s and '30s on Long Island. Filled with humanity even when empty, replete with tension even between chukkers, brimming with color even when the palette was confined to the green and blue of a polo field, the pictures portray the sport naturally and with enormous grace. The series covers every aspect of the game: its tactical nuances of motion and immobility, the grace and joy of the ponies, the firm but light control of the players, their mastery of mallet and ball, even the quirks and luxuries of the sidelines and grandstands.

As with many of the sports he painted, Golinkin was a competent and enthusiastic participant. Stick-and-ball periods at Meadow Brook frequently formed part of his day as did attendance at all the important matches. The five lithographs of the 1930 Internationals clearly demonstrate this familiarity. The ponies, players and positions are correct. In many cases, the players are recognizable, not by design (for Golinkin did not paint portraits) but because he felt and remembered so clearly.

A writer tried to put his reaction to Golinkin's polo works into words: "There is something close to magic in the way Golinkin makes the spectator feel the tension and immobility of that moment when three players

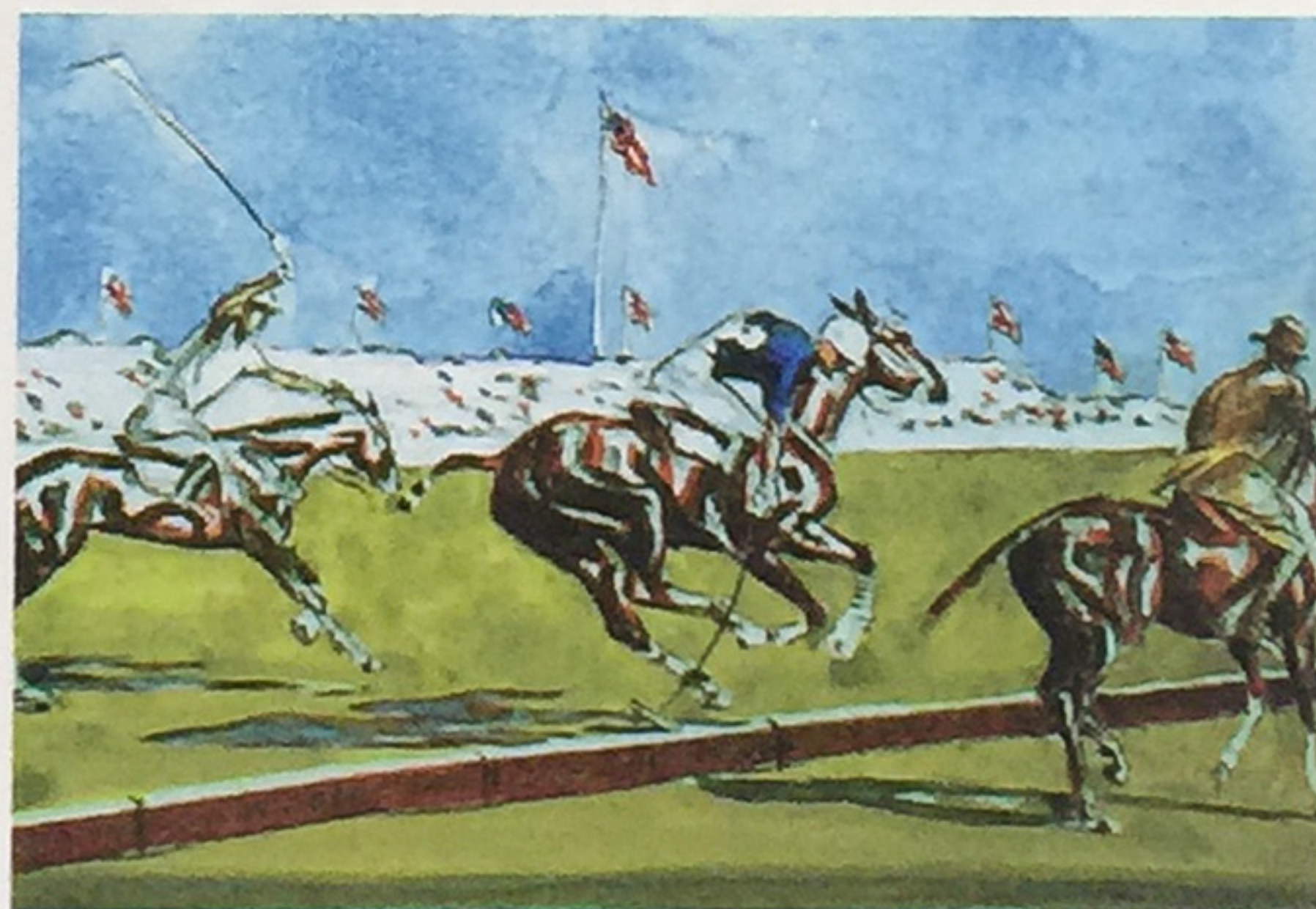


have reined in their ponies to await the outcome of the stroke begun by the fourth player. Men and ponies alike are held in a state of suspense motion that always makes the spectators at a game unconsciously hold their breaths. One almost feels the forthcoming exhalation of relief when the mallet connects with the willow ball and the dingdong of play is resumed."



The grandstand crowds are masterpieces in themselves. The enthusiasm, tension and festive mood are brought to life in the color of a dress, a turned shoulder or a tipped hat. The buzz is audible and exhilarating. In elegant contrast to the modern gooseneck, the transport, horse and human loom luxuriously over peaceful scenes of grooms wrapping legs, halftime talk and, in one case, the assistance with the donning a polo coat.

J.W. Golinkin's watercolor technique consisted first of drawing the scene from memory. He never used photographs to



refresh the retentive powers of his intense observation. His startling memory and control over the medium allowed him to linger for days over a watercolor which others would have been forced to finish in hours. The result is a body of work remarkable for its color, execution, sense of motion and celebration of man. These are paintings of rare artistic quality and merit portraying subjects and a period of more than passing interest to us all. They are a joy to discover, a delight to rediscover.

*Article and artwork courtesy of the Jeanne Chisholm Gallery.*



Joseph W. GOLINKIN was a uniquely American painter who celebrated American life during the 1920's and 1930's. He did not study or even go abroad as had previous generations of American painters. Like his teacher, George Luks and others of the Ashcan School, he feared the Old World would corrupt his American vision and sensibility. The result is a style and range of subject matter which is totally American, owing little to contemporary European painting. As such, it is of enormous artistic and historical importance.

Among this unique American group, GOLINKIN had probably the widest range of subject matter. His early work as an illustrator and his diverse personal interests led him to paint virtually all aspects of man and his pursuits. Sports, speakeasies, city streets, harbors, dance halls, stockyards, Jazz bands, rich and poor, all found their way to his brilliant palette. New York Is Like This, published in 1929 with H.I. Brock and The American Sporting Scene, published in 1942 with John Kieran bear rich testament to his scope.

GOLINKIN's career began at a time when newspapers and other periodicals still employed good painters to present graphic views of events. By the mid 1920's, he had been extensively reproduced in the New York Times and other important publications across America. By the end of the decade, GOLINKIN was already included in important group shows and was beginning to attract galleries to his work. By 1939 when he returned to active service, GOLINKIN was among the best known and acclaimed recorders of American life. During the decade, he was accorded a dozen one man shows at museums and galleries, he participated in the most prestigious group shows in the country and abroad, had had one book published with another in the works, and had received a Gold and a Bronze Olympic medal for excellence in art relating to sport.

The next twenty years were spent in the Navy from which he emerged a Rear Admiral. GOLINKIN's absence from the artistic world dimmed his previous fame. Galleries which clamoured for his work before the War were now showing only abstract work. GOLINKIN, therefore, began to paint solely for himself. His last years were spent in calm contemplation of ocean racing, particularly the America's Cup. Many of these later pictures were reproduced in Twelve Meter Challenges for the America's Cup published in 1977 with Norris Hoyt.

In late 1979, the Chisholm Gallery acquired two groups of art works from GOLINKIN's widow. These consisted of all of the unsold paintings, drawings, and lithographs of Polo and South Florida. Both groups were painted at the height of GOLINKIN's artistic powers, the mid 1930's.